Medical Supplies

731 758 648 The UNRRA medical and sanitation programme for the Ukraine is extremely small in relation to the needs; and the rate of deliveries has been the poorest of any commodity group.

Up to the end of January 1947 the Administration had shipped to the Ukraine 373 gross long tons of medical and sanitation equipment valued at 1,858,000 dollars, leaving a balance still to be shipped of just over 468,000 dollars.

In a country where the destruction has been so great and where food supplies are so low, a medical programme of 2,326,000 dollars cannot make much impression; however, such equipment as has been received is being used to the best possible advantage.

● 743 Most of the hospitals and invalids' homes in the Ukraine are operating under appalling difficulties; and the urgency of the need for equipment and medical supplies is everywhere evident. The UNRRA Mission early in 1946 described several hospitals which they had visited in various parts of the Ukraine. Here is their observation of the one at Kremenchug:

"Kremenchug formerly had a good 450-bed general hospital, which was blown up by a thoroughly efficient demolition battalion when the Germans retreated. All equipment, including an 8,000-volume medical library and a well-equipped X-ray laboratory, was demolished. The only buildings which escaped destruction were seven small sheds and storage houses on the outskirts of the hospital grounds.

"The hospital staff recently installed 250 beds in these ramshackle buildings. In a number of wards the windows were bricked up because no glass is available, and the only light came from an unshaded 40-watt electric bulb in the corridor. Paint was flaking off the floor and the walls of the surgery; most of the roofs leaked, there were no indoor toilets; fuel was available to heat only the operating and delivery rooms and the nursery. (Four babies, on an average, are delivered each 743 day). Many of the patients had no gowns and no bed clothes, except 758 what they were able to bring with them. No soap whatever has been available to the hospital for some time; laundry was simply being boiled with a little soda, and the floors were scrubbed with a lye solution. The only surgical equipment we saw was a few dozen scalpels and haemostats in one small cabinet in the corner of the operating room, and two sterilizers.

"The doctor in charge told us that his patients received an average diet of 1,000 to 1,200 calories a day, consisting mostly of bread, potatoes, cabbage soup, and 15 grams of fat. (The low calorie intake is largely due to the inability of the patients to digest the coarse whole-grain rye or wheat bread, which is available in reasonable quantities). Theoretically the hospital is entitled to 2,500 grams

of meat daily for each thirty patients; but, since there is rarely any meat to be had, it received 400 grams of dried milk as a substitute, or approximately 13 grams per patient each day.

"The hospital was so badly overcrowded that beds had been set up in the corridors and even in the yard. Some of these beds had been salvaged from the ruins of the old hospital, and consequently were badly twisted and charred."

The same general conditions prevailed in most of the hospitals visited. The fact that so much improvement has since been made with so little help promises the best use of future deliveries of UNRRA medical supplies. The programme includes in addition to dressings, drugs and chemicals, X-ray equipment and supplies, surgical instruments, dental equipment, and a penicillin plant.

Clothing

Since most of the Ukraine's clothing factories were heavily damaged or destroyed in the war, there is a widespread shortage of all articles of wearing apparel. The limited UNRRA programme has fallen considerably short of satisfying all the requirements; however, such supplies as have been sent - particularly textiles and shoes - have been economically used to help the most critical cases.

By the end of January 1947 UNRRA had sent the Ukraine 15,095 gross long tons of clothing valued at 16,801 dollars, leaving an unshipped balance of 55,000 dollars. The following table gives the composition of the shipments.

TABLE XXV

UNRRA Shipments of Clothing to the Ukraine up to January 31, 1947

	Thousand U.S. dollars	Gross long tons
Finished clothing	779	384
Blankets and comforters	902	522
Cotton textiles	573	321
Woollen textiles	3,487	1,359
Raw wool	2,240	3,729
Footwear	5,697	3,997
Upper leather	575	259
Sole leather	1,274	1,624
Hides	188	381
Miscellaneous textiles	183	149
Miscellaneous footwear	735	2,368
Unclassified	168	n.s.
Totals	16,801	15,095

Source : UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.